

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Southern Rubber Co Inc

North Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Southern Rubber Co. of Greensboro Celebrates ISO Registration

Client Profile:

Southern Rubber Company, Inc., was chartered in 1925 as the Carolinas' pioneer rubber house. In the beginning, the primary focus was oil jobber supplies and automobile tires. As the company grew and began to diversify, Southern Rubber Company became a major industrial rubber supply source. The company is engaged in the die cutting of rubber, foam sponge and paper products. In addition, the distribution end of the business provides O-Rings, hoses, seals and other rubber products to the public and established customers. Southern Rubber Company also has added a Urethane Fabrication shop that provides custom molded urethane parts. The Greensboro, North Carolina, facility has 35 employees.

Situation:

As a supplier to a major O-Ring manufacturer, Southern Rubber Company was requested to become ISO registered. Southern Rubber didn't have a recognized quality program and few written procedures that covered the company's overall operation. Southern Rubber contacted the local community college, Guilford Technical Community College, which provided funds to support ISO training by the Industrial Extension Service (IES) at North Carolina State University, a NIST MEP network affiliate.

Solution:

The management of Southern Rubber decided to go for ISO 9001:2000 registration to fulfill the request of their customers. IES specialist Barbara Williams led the ISO 9000 Technical Assistance Program at the community college. The consortium-type class was attended by three other companies. The group met on seven occasions according to a defined schedule, where Ms. Williams facilitated discussions on the requirements of the standard; what each company currently had in place to meet the requirements; and what was needed to fill any gaps. Ms. Williams visited the facility in December 2003 to assist in on-site implementation. All 35 employees participated in some degree. She conducted a formal review of the completed quality system documentation in January 2004. A formal pre-assessment audit was conducted in February 2004. Southern Rubber received their registration in April 2004.

Results:

- * Achieved ISO certification.
- * Retained annual customer sales of \$50,000.
- * Hired Quality Control Manager and Quality Control Technician.
- * Established a plant-wide recognized quality system.
- * Focused on customer satisfaction.

Testimonial:

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"It's hard to measure the large intangible benefit of getting people to work together on the same page. That is priceless. We've improved quality, costs, and our resources."

Bob Burwell, ISO Coordinator